Section Five

Creating Lifelong Readers: Serving Young Adults with Literacy in Mind

Literacy Notes for Libraries Serving Young Adults

Patrick Jones, writing in *New Directions for Library Service to Young Adults*, points out that "…the literacy needs of young adults do not receive much attention. While everyone recognizes how important it is for children to learn to read by grade three, there is a tendency to forget the reading development is a continuum, and the result is that emphasis on literacy decreases after elementary school" (Jones 30). Attempts to measure literacy in middle schools and high schools bear this out. A 1992 study measuring literacy skill in 31 countries found that in the United States, 9-year-olds were second in reading achievement, while 14-year-olds ranked ninth. In Missouri, the yearly statewide assessment scores usually show that in the same school, fewer seventh graders than third graders score in the advanced and proficient ranges. Scores usually drop again for 11th graders.

Some teens are skilled and avid readers, a fact we must remember. In an ideal literacy world, teen readers would all be fluent in managing print. The teen years would be a time when they would grow in their ability to handle different kinds of text while using the written word to expand their knowledge and experience. And for some teens it does work that way. Teens who are voracious readers are active if sometimes demanding library patrons, appearing often, conversing with us about many things, taxing our collections because they want more, or perplexing us because they want something else.

But the ideal literacy world is not universal. Some young people reach the teen years still struggling with print, never having broken the code. There are also teens who have mastered the print process but never move on to become real readers. They do the essential literacy tasks, but their grasp of the many facets of text and their engagement with the meanings conveyed by the text don't develop. They seldom make real meaning in response to what they read. Since these teens don't read, they have less practice, less background knowledge (a crucial factor in understanding what they read), even less interest, and, over time, develop less skill than readers who were progressing in literacy skill while their non-reading counterparts were standing still. Schools often say these students have "poor comprehension" and they account in part for the fact that test scores on the same group of students often drop as the group progresses in school.

Aliteracy, (also spelled *alliteracy*), the condition of being able to read but not reading enough to benefit from the skill, becomes an issue in the teen years and may continue into adulthood. Libraries are in a particularly good position to counter aliteracy since it requires no direct instruction. Love of reading is as much caught as taught, and libraries have their ways to make reading attractive.

Teens who are still struggling or unwilling readers are in a very difficult position in high school. The school assumes students are or should be literate, so a large part of the instruction shifts to independent reading. Emphasis on teaching literacy almost disappears from school curricula after elementary school. Even in remedial or resource classes, emphasis is often more on developing coping skills and "workarounds" than on developing literacy. Students who have not developed fluent reading in spite of intervention likely have learning disabilities of one kind of another that continue to interfere with literate behavior. Students who don't read well are put in

less challenging classes where they do less reading and writing, effectively widening the gap, since reading and writing are skills that build through use. Young people whose reading skills are not fluent usually do poorly in school and often develop other problems, especially behavior problems, to accompany poor school achievement. Students with poor reading achievement sometimes find that their reading scores block their access to classes they might otherwise find interesting or motivating. Reading problems can become part of a downward spiral that is difficult to break. Literacy problems are a leading factor in students dropping out of high school; then the dropouts are faced with the prospect of taking the GED exam later in life. The five components of the GED test are exclusively reading and writing, with a reading level of 10th to 12th grade and a math level that includes word problems, some algebra, and some plane geometry. Staying in school is the best course for students who struggle with reading, but the support systems that might help them with literacy problems are often rather scant, despite the efforts of resource teachers, and the teens themselves are often resistant.

On the other end of the school achievement continuum, students who excel in school may be placed in such demanding classes that they have no time to read for pleasure or enrichment during the school year. Therefore students we might expect to be our most avid library users may not be reading except in school topics, also missing some life-long skills and literacy development. Reaching these students is one wonderful reason to have a teen summer reading program during the months, when they are not overwhelmed with academic work.

Interestingly, doing poorly in school is not necessarily a measure of low overall literacy. Some students who do not do well in school practice a sort of undercover or unofficial literacy, includes notes, letters, journals, comic books, online text, Internet use, e-mail, chat rooms, consumerism, and games. Some teens are rather fluent in this variety of literacy but never connect it with the literacy behaviors demanded in school and do not apply those skills to academic tasks. Libraries seem to be a natural place to encourage this kind of general non-school literacy. While it may not boost school achievement or establish academic uses of literacy, basic literacy skill grows through use, whether practiced in journals and letters or through writing school reports. Encouraging any kind of literacy behavior in teens helps them while they are teens and when they become adults. And getting them involved with books may help bridge the gap between selective and overall literacy behaviors.

The International Reading Association, in a position paper on adolescent literacy, emphasizes the idea that adolescent literacy is a continuum rather then a set point. As with adults, the literacy demands and the complexity of literacy demands placed on adolescents are higher than they have ever been. The International Reading Association's recommendations for the literacy needs of adolescent learners include at least three needs libraries can help meet directly:

- Access to a wide variety of reading material appealing to their interests, and instruction that builds the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.
- Teachers (or in this case, librarians) who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers.
- Homes, communities, and a nation that supports the needs of adolescent learners.

Our collections are the perfect vehicle for giving adolescents “access to a wide variety of reading material that appeals to their interests…and desire to read increasingly complex materials.”

While there are few teachers operating exclusively out of libraries, tuned-in librarians who get to know individuals and provide good readers advisory can get a good grip on the complexities of individual adolescent readers. Libraries can be (and in many places already are) community organizations that support the needs of adolescent learners and tilt the balance toward an atmosphere valuing literacy.

The literacy principles that continue to guide us are extensions of the ones guiding us with older elementary schoolchildren:

- When readers spend time reading, they are building reading skill.
- When young people read texts that matter to them, they usually develop positive attitudes toward reading; this, in turn, leads them to read more and helps them become better readers as well as better thinkers.
- Reading builds knowledge of the world, which is valuable in its own right but is also tied to gaining background knowledge of both topics and text that enhance reading skill.

Reading while they are young starts teens on a lifelong reading habit, enriching and enlarging their lives throughout adolescence and adulthood. (Some of them won't have as much time to read again until they retire.)

Whether they are avid readers, casual occasional readers, reluctant readers, or even non-readers, teens are developing the relationship with reading that will continue into adulthood. Libraries can help shape that relationship and move it toward lifelong reading. In the process we move it toward lifelong learning and widening understanding of human experience.

It is important to note there are many reasons besides literacy to serve young adults. This notebook emphasizes literacy and urges librarians to think about the literacy implications of both collections and programming in addition to all the other life-affirming reasons to provide collections and programming for young adults.

Collections

Patrick Jones summarizes collection possibilities for teens and reminds us that while collections are essential to a library, the "stuff" isn't an end in itself.

> While it is not the role of the library to teach reading, the issue of adolescent literacy is one that all staff working with teens needs to have on their radar screens. Support for adolescent literacy begins with an understanding of some of the reasons why young adults choose not to read. Teens who are poor readers will certainly associate reading with failure. Developing collections that contain high interests but low vocabulary materials may increase the chances that teens will succeed. Audio books, comic books, and even a collection of high-teen-appeal children's books may help struggling young adult readers succeed. But even those with skills may be aliterate – they can read, but choose not to. Collection development, in those cases, might need to steer more toward nonfiction or magazines which often do not require the same amount of time or concentration as fiction. Even teens that like to read often are confronted with negative pressures not to read, in particular, boys. Again, collection development in "hot"

> nonfiction areas and magazines works against this stigma. Decorating the library with something as simple as ALA Read posters, such as those featuring male sports or movie stars, may put reading in a more positive light. Many young adults do not receive encouragement to read at home, and therefore libraries and classroom teachers must positively reinforce reading. This is a tricky proposition however, as one reason many teens "reject" reading is because a teacher or other adults force it on them. It is only by establishing relationships, and thus breaking down this natural teen barrier, that librarians can really begin to encourage reading. (32)

Selection guides, Web sites, and word-of-mouth help the librarian pick books and periodicals for teens. Sometimes reluctant or low-level readers prefer magazines and other non-book formats, even comic books. So called "high-low" or "hi-lo" books, that is, books written about high interest topics at a low reading level, when available for teens, can also help them bridge the literacy gap. They offer success to students who don't experience much success and have the added advantage that when a teen is simply reading, he or she is getting better at it. Titles are limited but their number is growing; some graphic novels will fit into this category. A few books published for adult new readers might also help, as might some nonfiction meant for younger children that doesn't look "kiddy." Nonfiction that backs up traditional school subjects may also have its merits and is often available at below-grade-level reading levels. Some authors simply use more accessible writing styles than other authors. Often, educational catalogs attach reading levels to titles also available as trade books, and these can be of some help in forming the young adult collection. Building a collection that includes books for teens who are not yet good readers may take some book-by-book selection, but it is well worth it if we can help these teens become readers and reach real literacy. Building a total young adult collection that also serves teens who can read at the expected level supports increased literacy skill with many kinds of texts, builds knowledge and understanding, counters societal aliteracy, and develops the habit of lifelong reading.

Literacy remains a diversity issue in some ways, and teens may yield to peer or cultural pressure that says being a reader is either not acceptable within the group or else it is somebody else's issue. So materials reflecting all people and invoking a diversity of accomplishment and background remain important in the young adult collection.

Graphic novels, those descendents of or elaborations on comic books, are found in more and more libraries for several reasons. As a literacy support strategy they are an attempt to simply get teens to read. While they create the impression of having a low reading level, many of them require considerable literacy skill. The text and illustrations don't flow across a page in traditional left-to-right order, so context becomes important; but context is expressed differently from regular texts. Many use imaginary words or atypical spellings. Print may be small or in irregular typefaces. Part of the story line in graphic novels and comic books is yielded to illustrations. The print portion alone may be hard to follow, but at the same time the illustration may carry readers without fluent print literacy skills. The very lack of linear progression that raises the print reading level may work well for some learning disabled teens and even adults. Reading level is a fluid concept, and people can often manage text that interests them at a more difficult level than text in which they are not interested.

Teens might use audio books for the same reason adults do – they are busy, they spend large amounts of time in their cars, they can listen via a headset while doing something else, or they enjoy the performance aspect of well-read audios. Audio books have a hidden literacy agenda in inviting teens who don't handle print well to share the experiences of those who do. They provide motivation and help teens develop some of the same meaning-level skills the text version of the same book might. Recorded books are a time-honored technique teachers working with learning disabled students use to keep problems with print from stunting students academically. Given the popularity of audio books in the literate adult community, getting teens started on audio books may help them enter the world of full literacy through motivation and background knowledge.

Programming

There are many good reasons to have programs, activities, special collections, and a welcoming atmosphere for teens. Happily, as with so many other library efforts, literacy overlaps other activities.

Many programming events don't actually require literacy skill, but if teens attend them they are rubbing shoulders with literacy, being exposed to literate behavior, and at least observing reasons to read. While having fun at the library may not be a literacy activity in itself, the fact that the fun is at the library influences the atmosphere in favor of literacy.

Both programming and collections for teens often rely on pertinence (or at least on teens' perception of pertinence) to the lives young adults lead and to the issues young adults face. While younger patrons may only seek information about school projects or hobbies, teens often seek information about issues impacting them directly. While the aesthetic aspects of reading remain important, teens may now be led to see the library as an information place. We encourage their literacy if we make them aware of how much information is carried by printed words. They may also be interested in how privately information may be accessed through print.

Successful young adult programs often harness peer influence as a resource. Some libraries use a teen council to help plan programming and even materials purchase. Some libraries select teen reviewers for books in the collection. Others have had good success with Teen Friends of the Library or other structured teen volunteer efforts. Teens tend to bring in more teens, and teens who are able and avid readers may influence some of the more reluctant readers in the teen ranks in the direction of active, involved literacy.

Many libraries have successful young adult book groups or book events. The literacy value of leading teens to interact with text is large. In the end, reading is not really reading until the reader makes meaning of his or her own in response to the author's meaning. The major literacy tasks of high school, when all goes well, are learning to make deeper connections, read critically, and handle more varied texts. Book discussions and activities support this essential literacy activity. Even among teens who are active readers, support and experience help keep them active and build even more skill. In some education circles, there is great concern about the low

reading comprehension scores of high school students who can apparently manage text and decode adequately. The root of aliteracy is often that readers never respond to text sufficiently to see it connect to themselves or never catch on that the decoding is not an end in itself. Hearing the model of interaction with text and seeing other teens find books interesting, pertinent, and moving, helps teens with literacy at the same time discussion groups are helping them with the issues the books raise. Choosing books with an audio version for the group discussions invites teens who may still not be at the expected reading level to participate. (The interpretation offered by the reader whose voice is heard on the audio version tape may even become material for discussion at times.)

Much of the time of teen life revolves around school. Literacy issues are certainly most pronounced at school. Quiet collaboration with schools may lead to tutoring groups or homework helpers. Knowing what is happening at school can lead to book displays and interest groups as well as programs on whatever is happening at school, whether it is football, prom fashions, an author visit, or a recycling drive. On the other hand, some teens who do not use school-based literacy well may still use literacy skills in their lives outside school, and library programming gives them an opportunity to practice and perhaps enlarge literacy skill in ways they won't embrace at school.

As with upper elementary students, anything inviting participants to re-write, re-tell, or re-read boosts the literacy component of a program. The skill teens bring to such activities is often dramatically better than the skill with which younger children re-write, re-tell, or re-read. Actual public performance may now be possible for students who put together a choral reading or a drama. Many teens have the skill to read well to younger children or do a dramatic retelling of a story for youngsters even if their own reading is not "at grade level." Reading easy books to younger children is one concrete way to help them practice text they can read in a socially acceptable manner and keep them connected to the fun of reading.

Writing is still the other end of the reading process and people who gain skill in one usually gain skill in the other. Many teens want to be heard, and a teen writers guild or authors group might be a deep investment in both literacy and growth. By the teen years, many have sufficient skill to produce writings that other people will find interesting and moving, so the options for showcasing their work increase. Teen writings can lead to young adult events in coffeehouse, open mike, or author read-a-loud fashion. Inviting a local actor, author, or dignitary to read aloud or respond to teen writings is another option. Unlike younger patrons, teens can often spend more than a hour at a time at the library and function semi-independently, so a writing group can be hosted as an ongoing activity rather than a structured, timed program that must be prepared for weekly. Encouraging and mentoring a teen writers group would be a fine place for volunteer involvement by a qualified adult.

In summary, the literacy principles that apply to supporting young adults are the same as those that guide us with upper elementary patrons:

- If they are reading, they are getting better at it
- If they have reason to read (enjoyment counts as a reason), motivation will move them toward literacy

- If we can move them to avoid aliteracy and become involved readers, we enrich both their lives and society.

To be sure, when we provide good collections and programming for adolescents, we are doing more than aiding their literacy skills. But helping teens become fully literate and encouraging them to become readers are among the vital services libraries can provide to help young adult patrons make the sometimes difficult passage into thriving adulthood.

Works Cited

Jones, Patrick. *New Directions in Library Services to Young Adults Library Services*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2002.

The full text of the International Reading Association's 1999 study and position paper on adolescent literacy may be found at or http://www.reading.org/pdf/1036.pdf or obtained through information available at http://www.reading.org/focus/adolescent.html.

Get Serious:
Comic Books and Graphic Novels in Your Library

Definitions:

- Comic book - flimsy single issue
- Trade paperback – in this case, a collection of comics in one volume
- Graphic novel - self-contained story not printed elsewhere

Advantages of a graphic novel collection:

- Increase circulation
- Appeal to reluctant readers and at-risk youth
- Demonstrates to traditional and non-traditional teen library users that we are interested in serving them
- Appeal to boys

Drawbacks of graphic novel collection:

- Poor binding
- Some are poor quality literature
- Easily stolen
- Your Director/Board hates them

Data:

IEA (International Education Association) did an assessment of more than 200,000 children in 32 countries. Finnish children achieved the highest reading scores. The most common choice for recreational reading among Finnish 9-year-olds? Comic books. Fifty-nine percent (59%) read a comic almost every day.

Teen Web Sites

http://teenspace.cincinnatilibrary.org/ is a wonderful teen site with book reviews for teens by teens. This site has an amazing homework help area with links to SparkNotes, MegaSites, and periodicals, as well as tips on evaluation of the information we get on the Web. There are lists of award winning books for teens and when we click on winning titles we are taken to the ALA, YASIG page which lists many book lists and awards. This site has it all.

http://www.teenreads.com/ is another great Web site with a lot of book reviews for teens by teens as well as in-depth author profiles and interviews. The site is part of Book Report Network, a group founded in 1996, which shares book reviews, author profiles and excerpts from the hottest new releases. The site **http://www.bookreporter.com/** has links to the teen read site as well as a kids reads site (**http://www.kidsreads.com/**) and reading group guides.

http://www.grouchy.com/ has great teen book links, links to authors online, writing links, and even teen zines.

http://www.teenlit.com/ provides a place to post your writings, read the writings of other teens, and read book reviews. Click on the writers workshop and you will find lots of writing tips from other teens, a page of editing marks and poetry tips. This is a great site for any teen with an interest in writing.

http://www.rbls.lib.il.us/bpl-bin/series.pl is a long address, but worth the typing. Maria Levetzow of the Bettendorf, Iowa Public Library has put together a wonderful searchable site of young adult series and sequel books. Everyone should bookmark this one.

http://www.ala.org/yalsa is the place to find current and previous winners of young adult award books. Also listed are popular paperbacks for young adults and quick picks for reluctant young adult readers, current and previous.

Activity Notes

Simple Steps To A Young Adult Read-In At The Library

GETTING READY:

1. Send adapted copy of the following news release to your local newspaper, television stations, radio and to middle and senior high schools for inclusion in their newspapers.
2. Distribute copies of the following (adapted) flier to schools and anywhere youth congregate. Plaster your library with them.
3. Purchase soda and paper goods.
4. Set up a display of popular reading material for teens to choose.
5. Copy a scavenger hunt from this handbook.
6. Clear meeting room of all furniture.
7. Order pizza.
8. Enlist at least one staff member to help you.
9. Follow the enclosed read-in schedule or adapt it to suit you.
10. Get ready to have a great time!

Teen Read-In Schedule

6 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.	Get Acquainted (mass pandemonium)
6:15 p.m. – 6:35 p.m.	Quiet reading time
6:35 p.m. – 6:50 p.m.	Teens go on scavenger hunt
6:50 p.m. – 7:05 p.m.	Teens discuss scavenger hunt answers
7:05 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Quiet reading time
7:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.	Teens eat pizza, drink soda, and visit
8 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Teens read quietly
8:30 p.m. – 8:50 p.m.	As a group, teens discuss what they have read, what their favorite book is, and/or who their favorite author is
8:50 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Clean Up

Sample News Release

Contact Person: Teena Services, Librarian
Yourtown Public Library
222 Streetname Drive
Yourtown , MO 00000
333-333-3333

Area youth between the ages of _____ and _____ are invited to the Yourtown Public Library for a teen read-in. "We want our teens to know the library is an accessible, safe, and fun place for them," said Teena Services, librarian.

Youth should phone or come by the library to register for the event, as we only have room for 25.

The program will begin at 6 p.m. and youth can bring their favorite blanket and pillow as well as any reading material they would like. We will also have reading materials available.

Not only will youth be reading, but they also will be participating in a scavenger hunt and eating pizza.

Parents must come to the door to pick up their teens at 9 p.m.

Sample Flyer

TEEN READ-IN

YOURTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2010

If you are 13 to 19 years old and like to read and eat pizza, you are invited to come by the library at 222 Streetname Drive
or
Call 333-333-3333
to register for the teen read-in.

DO NOT DELAY
REGISTRATION IS LIMITED TO 25.

Parents must meet teens at the door at 9 p.m. or we will turn them into frogs.

Poetry Slam or Open Mike Night

Poetry slams are fun competitions. People usually sign up to read one or more poems in round robin. Judges, not usually experts, but people from the audience, rate the poems. The finalists read again usually for three rounds until a winner is chosen. There is a moderator/emcee.

Open Mike Nights offer people a chance to step up and read their original works, similar to a talent show. There is no judging.

Either of these can be low budget, low resource programs, or ones you can pour some extra money and time into. If you have the space and money, both work well as a "coffeehouse." Set up small tables around the room; decorate the room with a coffeehouse or other theme. Subdued lighting and candles work well. Serve hot coffee, flavored teas, hot chocolate and cold drinks, along with cookies or donuts.

1. If you are conducting a poetry slam, choose three judges from your audience.

2. Decide whether participants may read only original poetry or poetry written by someone else. Have some poetry books on hand.

3. Set some time limits (usually 10 minutes maximum).

4. Recruit students through schools. English and creative writings teachers are good resources.

5. Design an attractive flyer to send to schools, recreation centers, churches, or wherever young adults congregate.

6. Encourage teens to invite others they know who would be interested.

7. Serve refreshments and let them have fun.

8. A microphone may or may not be necessary, depending on the size of your room.

Mad Libs®

Mad Libs can be used as part of a group activity, such as a read-in. Give each teen a copy of the answer sheet and ask them to fill it in as you call out the parts of speech. You can then have the teens that want to do so come up and read the story by placing their words in the blanks. I find even teens that hate to read will read their story because they just know theirs is the funniest.

Mad libs can also be used as a contest in your library. Teens can pick up an instruction sheet and an answer sheet and return the answer sheet when it is complete. Be sure to make sure their names are on the returned sheet. You can then copy the answers into the page with the blanks and give them to a popular public figure to pick out the top one or more. Prizes can be awarded and everyone who participates can be invited to a pizza party where they will have an opportunity to read their story.

I included the story first so that you could see how I made this one up. I wrote the story, then decided which words to leave out and what part of speech each deleted word was. I then completed the instruction and answer sheets.

You do not have to write your own though. Inexpensive Mad Libs® books can be purchased just about anywhere.

The Little Old Librarian

Do you know why people believe librarians are little old ladies with glasses and their hair in a bun? Let me tell you how it came about. I walked into my public library one day and walked to the fiction section to pick up something to read. A small ugly book caught my eye. When I opened the book, a huge rat appeared in a puff of smoke. He was as big as a man. I threw the book down and turned to run, but he blocked my way. He told me his name was Pat the Rat and he was the victim of an evil spell put on him by a librarian. Pat begged me to read him the first chapter of the book. He said that if I would, the spell would be broken and he would turn back into a beautiful genie and grant me 2 1/2 wishes. I decided that even though his breath smelled like rotten cheese, and his nose hairs needed clipping, I would do it. What choice did I really have? I was trapped. Pat sat down in a chair, put his huge head in his paws, and listened. The story was about three little pigs that built a house made of beautiful long golden hair and a gingerbread roof. Weird! As soon as I had uttered the last word of the chapter, he turned into a gorgeous genie with huge diamond earrings and tons of gold jewelry. He was so happy that he laughed and jumped around and ran. The librarian said we were disturbing the other patrons and made us leave, but not before I had Pat grant me my first wish: That librarians would always have the reputation of being little old ladies with glasses and buns.

The Little Old Librarian

Do you know why people believe librarians are little old ___1___ with glasses and their hair in a bun? Let me tell you how it came about. I ___2___ ___3___ into my public library one day and walked to the ___4___ section to pick up something to ___5___. A small ugly book caught my eye. When I ___6___ the book, a huge rat ___7___ appeared in a puff of smoke. He was as big as a man. I threw the book down and turned to run, but he blocked my way. He told me his name was ___8___ the rat and he was the victim of an evil spell put on him by a librarian. ___9___ begged me to read him chapter ___10___ of the book. He said that if I would, the spell would be broken and he would turn back into a ___11___ genie and grant me 2 1/2 wishes. I decided that even though his breath smelled like ___12___ cheese and his nose hairs needed clipping, I would do it. What choice did I really have? I was trapped. ___13___ sat down in a ___14___, put his huge head in his ___15___, and listened. The story was about three little pigs that built a house made of beautiful golden hair and a ___16___ roof. Weird! As soon as I had uttered the last word of the chapter, he turned into a ___17___ genie with huge ___18___ earrings and tons of ___19___ jewelry. He was so happy that he laughed and ___20___ ___21___ and ran. The librarian said that we were disturbing the other ___22___ and made us leave, but not before I had ___23___ grant me my first wish: That librarians would always have the reputation of being little old ___24___ with glasses and buns.

By ___25___

The Little Old Librarian Instructions

Instruct the young adults to fill in the their words and/or types of speech on the answer sheet.

1. Animal
2. Verb
3. Adverb
4. Adjective
5. Verb
6. Verb
7. Adverb
8. A name
9. Same name
10. A number
11. Adjective
12. Adjective
13. Same name as 8 & 9
14. Piece of furniture
15. Noun
16. Food
17. Adjective
18. Adjective
19. Adjective
20. Adverb
21. Verb
22. Animal
23. Name same as in 8, 9, 13
24. Same animal as #1
25. Famous person

Mad Lib Game Answer Sheet

NOUN: A person, place or thing (boy, shoe, fork, car)

ADJECTIVE: A word that describes a person place or thing (big, red, dark)

VERB: An action word (walk, sing, eat, read)

ADVERB: A word that describes a verb (slowly, bravely, loudly, badly)

PRONOUN: A word that takes the place of a noun (he, they, your, it, hers)

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Library Scavenger Hunts

A library scavenger hunt sends teens looking through the collection for facts, collection objects, or information sources. There are many reasons to use library scavenger hunts in programming for teens.

1. Many at risk or reluctant readers have no idea where to find anything in the library. They might have an interest, but not know where to find the item of interest or even know the library has such an item. Many teens are surprised to learn that we have comics, *Mad Magazine*, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, and *Nintendo Power*. We have a responsibility to teach our teens how to locate and use our materials.

2. Scavenger hunts can be used during a read-in, regular young adult group meeting, or for any time that you have a group of teens in the library. They can be written on any subject or no particular subject.

3. Scavenger hunts can be used as the basis for a contest. For example: Distribute copies of the scavenger hunt questions to teens in the library as part of a contest. Each teen who correctly completes the scavenger hunt by the determined time will receive a food coupon, an entry blank for a drawing where you give away a book or other item, or a voucher for $1 off of their next library fine. Use your imagination.

An excellent resource for scavenger hunt question ideas is *The New Elementary School Librarian's Almanac* by Barbara Farley Bannister. The book gives ideas for each month of the school year, which include library skills activities, monthly themes, special days, and lists of author birthdays.

YA Scavenger Hunt #1

1. Look up the word “apple” in an encyclopedia. Name three different kinds of apples.

2. What is an apple maggot? Use an encyclopedia to discover the answer.

3. Apples are delicious. Use a thesaurus to find another word that means delicious.

4. Use the computerized catalog to find the titles and call numbers of two books about apples.

5. Use *The American National Biography* to find out why John Francis Appleby was famous. Hint: REF, 920.073, Ame, v1.

YA Scavenger Hunt#1 Answers

1. Jonathan, Gala, Winesap
2. wormlike larva of the apple fly
3. appetizing, palatable, sapid
4.
5. Invented a basic knotting device that became the foundation for all farm binding machinery

YA Scavenger Hunt #2

1. Eleanor Roosevelt was born in October. On what date was she born and what is one reason she is famous? Use a book to find your answer. What was your source?

2. The United States got a great bargain when it purchased Alaska on October 18, 1867. From whom was it bought and how much did it cost? Use the Internet to find your answer. At what site did you find the answer?

3. Use the Computerized Catalog to discover how many books with the word pumpkin in the title are in this library.

4. Is the pumpkin a vegetable or a fruit? What was the source you used for your answer?

5. Which spice is **not** included in a recipe for pumpkin pie? Yes, you will need to find a recipe.

   Cinnamon Salt Fennel Allspice

YA Scavenger Hunt#2 Answers

1. October 11, 1884; wife of Franklin Roosevelt; representative to the United Nations

2. Russia; 7.2 million, or 2 cents per acre

3. 24

4. World Book Encyclopedia– Found in P for pumpkin, a vegetable
   New Book of Knowledge Encyclopedia- in V for vegetable
   The American Heritage Student's Dictionary-fruit
   The World Book Encyclopedia Dictionary-fruit

5. fennel

YA Scavenger Hunt#3

1. What in the world is allspice? What does it taste like? Your source?

2. Mickey Mouse was born in November. What was the date and year of his birth? Your source?

3. On what day of the week did Mickey celebrate his 1st birthday?

4. What is a baby turkey called?

5. National Book Week is in November. Who wrote the following quotation about books: "…and entertains the harmless day with a well-chosen book or friend?" Hint: Ref, 808.882, OXF.

YA Scavenger Hunt #3 Answers

1. A spice, a combination of cinnamon, cloves & nutmeg
2. November 18, 1928
3. Monday
4. poult
5. Sir Henry Wotton, Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, ref, 808.882, OXF

Notes for Library Scavenger Hunts

Scavenger hunts are fun for teens, and older elementary children, and even adults. They are instructional as they teach about both the library and the information found. They can be used alone, as an activity after a class tour, or as "filler" with other programs.

Anyone can write a scavenger hunt:

1. Keep your questions simple at first.
2. Allow youth to work in groups.
3. Gauge the number of questions to the amount of time allowed.
4. Set a time limit.
5. Provide a variety of questions that will allow for the use of different reference media and search tools.
6. Use your discussion of scavenger hunt answers to instruct on library usage.
7. Praise the teens for their participation and knowledge.
8. Ask participants to provide sources for their answers.
9. Check your library for the answer to every question and list your source on your answer sheet (there's a chance you will forget where you found something!)
10. Have fun with it!
11. A good source for ideas is: *The New Elementary School Librarian's Almanac*, Barbara Farley Bannister, ISBN 0876286058.

The Basics:

1. Make copies of the scavenger hunt questions for as many youth as you believe will be attending.
2. Distribute copies of hunt questions and answers to any library personnel that might be approached by youth for help.
3. Gather youth and give each one a copy of the hunt questions. They may work in groups of their choosing or alone. If you have a teen who may have a hard time finding answers, quietly suggest to a more knowledgeable youth that he/she takes the other "under their wing."
4. Give youth a time to be back in the room, usually 15-20 minutes.
5. Set out snacks while your teens are hunting. When they return, discuss hunt answers while they eat.

Remember:

Have fun! Make the hunt like a game.
Keep it simple!
Don't try to make up your questions without finding the answers in your library.
Don't pressure anyone to respond - it will seem too much like school!

Cooperative Programs

One way to reach our at-risk teens is through partnerships with our schools. (Low literacy is often part of being at risk.) At the Hannibal Public Library, we have implemented three cooperative programs. These samples may help other communities develop programs that work in their own communities.

EXPLORATORY READING

This program began several years ago when I was contacted by a 6th grade teacher of a small (six to ten students) at-risk reading class. The students in the at-risk class are chosen by the 6th grade reading teacher on the basis of their 5th grade reading level tests. The students must be one or two grade levels lower than other 5th grade readers, but at the same time not qualify for the learning disability program.

Each year I visit several of these classes. I spend thirty to forty-five minutes reading and booktalking some of my favorite read-a-loud picture books to the students. I talk to them about how much fun it is to read to the younger children in their homes and when they are babysitting. I explain that it is a good excuse for checking out picture books. I make sure the books I take are fun with attractive illustrations. I leave a variety of books, which I have already checked out to the teacher. The students then choose a book, which they would like to read aloud, and are given class time to practice reading their choice. Later, the students are taken to a grade school to read to children in kindergarten and/or 1st grade.

When I asked the teacher if she thought the program was successful, she said yes. The 6th grade students had an opportunity to mentor someone, and as a result, they developed a new self-confidence about their reading ability and some even developed a joy of reading. The teacher also noted that the children who had been read to wrote thank you notes to their reader, which was a further boost to her students.

Within the school, the class is called an Exploratory Reading Class. The program continues.

LUNCH AT THE LIBRARY

Another cooperative program with school staff is called Lunch at the Library. The students involved are in a 7th grade exploratory reading class. They are chosen based on their 6th grade reading level tests. The class is made up of six to ten students whose reading scores are one to two grade levels lower than 7th grade. They also do not qualify for the learning disability program. The school packs sack lunches, which the teacher brings and the library provides soda and a dessert. At one lunch, the students had earned personal pan pizzas and these were delivered to the library.

The students are given a tour of the young adult area and a hands-on explanation of the young adult call numbers. They are also given a tutorial on the library automated catalog system. The

students are then assigned a partner and asked to complete a scavenger hunt. The scavenger hunt questions involve location of young adult materials, with a focus on items of interest such as lower reading level fiction, graphic novels, comics, magazines, audio books, and high interest nonfiction. High interest nonfiction at our library includes biographies of famous celebrities and athletes, drawing books, recipe books, and sports books, especially skate boarding. The same class may have two or three lunches at the library during the school year.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL VISITS

In addition to booktalking in our private and public school reading classes, I visit our alternative school at least four times a year. There is a direct connection between poor reading ability and scholastic achievement. Many, but not all, students in our alternative schools are scholastic underachievers. The majority have behavior problems. I believe many times these students' poor behavior and underachievement in school are directly related. Many have a poor and frustrating home life with little or no support from family. At school they are frustrated by their inability to keep up, and in their frustration they act out and become students with behavior problems. There is not much we can do about their home/family lives, but if we can increase their reading ability we have a good chance at helping them become better scholastic achievers. When I visit these students, I hope to demonstrate to them that they are worthwhile and valuable. As I choose books to talk to them, I consider their needs. These teens particularly like to read about people who have overcome great obstacles, thus the popularity of books such as Dave Pelzer's *A Child Called It*, and Louis Sachar's *Holes*. I do not worry so much about presenting good literature, although I think *Holes* certainly qualifies as such. I focus instead on appeal, format and specific materials for lower-level readers.

In addition, during this past school year the alternative school visited the library once a month for four months for a program very similar to Lunch at the Library. We did not always have lunch, but we did have snacks and soda. The teens participated in scavenger hunts and had some quiet reading time with discussion following. In the discussion, there were no right or wrong comments or opinions about the material they were reading.

I have found these students are more apt than students in mainstream classes are to stop by the library to visit or talk to me about what they are reading or should read.

Because the majority of students in alternative schools are at risk, booktalking to them is a wonderful opportunity to promote literacy to a concentrated audience of needy teens.

Booktalks

What is a booktalk? It's what you say to someone to convince them to read a book. Why booktalk? To stimulate reading for fun! In addition to the other benefits of reading for fun, reading for fun builds literacy. Time spent reading is linked to increased reading achievement. Here are some hints to help you prepare a booktalk.

1. As you read a book, keep a notebook handy to jot down page numbers of important information or good read-aloud passages. When you're done with the book, decide if you want to talk it.
2. Write it out. A booktalk can be all your own words, part your words and part book passage or all book passage – whatever feels right to you.
3. When you're done, edit it and cut what you don't have to say. Then practice. Practice to your spouse, to the mirror, to yourself, even to the dog, but practice!
4. Your booktalk can be 30 seconds or 5 minutes, whatever you're comfortable with. (Booktalks over 5 minutes lose their intensity.)
5. Feel theatrical? Add music or props. For instance, hold a hatchet while booktalking *The Hatchet.* Wear a cowboy hat while booktalking *Sunshine Rider: The First Vegetarian Western.* Play a recording of a love song while booktalking *Thwonk!*
6. A literacy note: previewing a book helps struggling readers understand it.

Do…

☺ Know your audience – keep it age appropriate.

☺ Read and like the book.

☺ Whether it's fiction or nonfiction, show the book.

☺ Keep it under 5 minutes.

☺ Maintain eye contact.

☺ Mention the title and author before and after.

☺ Tell your audience where they can locate the book in your library, or have copies available to check out.

☺ Leave your audience with a question about the book or the story in their minds.

Don't…

☹ Memorize (unless you're <u>really</u> comfortable with it).

☹ Give away too much.

☹ Get into subplots - keep it simple.

☹ Portray a book as better than it is.

Adapted from *Book Your Summer: Missouri Teen Summer Reading Program Planning Manual*.
Missouri State Library, 2000.

Some notes on booktalks from an enthusiastic practitioner

Every librarian working with teens should have a few booktalks up his/her sleeve. Booktalks are a good way to sell books to teens on an individual basis, promote books to reading groups, and a most excellent way to get your foot in the door of a reading class. I need to mention that booktalks differ from book reviews in that they are designed to motivate the listener to read the book, to hook them, and leave them hanging. Many times after a booktalk, a student will raise their hand and ask me what happens in the book. Of course, I do not tell them but I am encouraged because I know that they want to hear "the rest of the story."

When teens come to us in the library and ask for a good book to read, we can use booktalks to give them choices. One of the things I always tell a person when I am encouraging them to booktalk is that they must have read and liked the book. If we have done this, we can talk with genuine enthusiasm about the book and enthusiasm is as catching as chicken pox.

We have a young adult group that meets monthly during the school year to read and discuss books. At the beginning of each year, I do booktalks on a few books that I think the teens might enjoy. Individuals in the group make impromptu talks on what they would like to read and discuss. The teens then vote on what they want to read. When leading the book discussion I ask questions such as: What was your favorite part in the book? Why? What was your least favorite part? Why? Who was your favorite character? Why? Which character did you like the least? Why? If you could change one part of the book, what would it be and how would you change it? Were you satisfied with the end? Why or why not?

Our teachers are busy people who are usually happy to have someone visit their class, especially if that person is there to encourage their students to read. The students enjoy having a class visitor, as it provides a distraction from the regular schedule. This gives us an advantage because the reason for our visit is simply to portray reading as fun and to motivate readers and non-readers alike to read for the fun of it whether that means fiction, nonfiction, magazines, cookbooks, newspapers, training manuals, or comic books. My advice is to get a few booktalks ready and approach a teacher about visiting her class. If one class enjoys your visit then you are on your way. The word will spread and you will be invited to other classes.

For expert information on how to booktalk, look for publications by Joni Bodart and Patrick Jones. I learned just about everything I know about booktalking from them. Some samples for you to borrow or draw from follow.

Booktalk

This Side Of Paradise

Steven L. Layne

About a year ago my dad went to work for the Eden Company. He said it was the perfect place to work. His boss, the mysterious Adam Eden even had his own community - Paradise.

I didn't think too much about it - his job - until my dad said we were moving to Paradise. Of course my brother and I didn't want to leave our home, our friends or our school but we had no choice.

Read Page 32, part of the 1st paragraph:

I've heard of gated communities where every well-to-do family has well-to-do neighbors on either side, but Paradise was in a class all by itself. It was not a gated community: it was a gated village! As we approached the entrance, enormous brick columns - 10 to 12 feet tall with wrought-iron fencing seemed to encapsulate the land for as far as the eye could see. The landscape beyond the entrance was a Monet come to life. Through the opening at the gatehouse, we could view a magnificent lake with water as clear and blue as the purest sapphire, and birds seemed to be singing from within the village. We could make out several varieties of flowers and trees as we drove toward the gatehouse, and it seemed a certainty that even more wonders awaited us within.

The whole town was perfect and the new house was beautiful - perfect, better than any house we could have dreamed of owning.

The school "The Garden School" was perfect too. The students were perfect - too perfect. So perfect that they almost seemed like robots, which is of course impossible.

My father had always been a perfectionist but now he become like a madman. He expected us to be perfect. Mostly I just tried to avoid him, and then one day my brother refused to wear the Garden School uniform. My dad beat him. That was scary, but what was even scarier was when my brother tried to call the police and was told: We have no police – this is paradise.

From *This Side of Paradise* by Steven L. Layne.

Booktalk:
The Night I Disappeared
Julie Reece Deever

Something scary was happening to 17-year-old Jamie Tessman. Jamie's mother was the defense attorney in a high profile murder case being tried in Chicago, so they had to move there. Jamie missed Webb, her one and only friend. She had been with Webb every day since she was 9 years old and being apart from him was hard. But not only did Jamie miss her sort-of boy friend, something crazy was going on in her head. Ever since Jamie and her mother had arrived at their temporary home in Chicago, she had been plagued by these freaky mind slips; she didn't know what else to call them.

In these daydreams or mind slips, it's like Jamie really is with Webb and talking to him. I think we all do that – imagine conversations in our head. But what was weird was that instead of having her eyes closed or staring into space like we usually do when we are daydreaming, Jamie was talking to Webb aloud. She was making gestures and looking at him and in her mind she was really with him in a variety of places. To other people it appeared that she was talking to someone who was invisible. Gradually it was getting worse, and Jamie was out of it for longer periods of time. Thankfully, Jamie was alone a lot of the time but people began noticing, and Jamie was sure she was losing her mind.

Then one day she had one of the daydreams/mind slips in the courtroom when court was in session, and when she came to every person in the court was staring at her and the bailiff was telling her that she had to leave. It was now clear to everyone Jamie needed professional help and she was admitted to a psychiatric ward.

From *The Night I Disappeared*, by Julie Reece Deaver.

Booktalk
Shattering Glass
Gail Giles
(mature)

Rob Haynes was the most popular boy in school. He had a way with people. He could charm just about anyone. Rob was our leader, the Bobster's, Coop's and mine. We did whatever he wanted us to do and I mean whatever! Rob decided that we should take Simon Glass under our wing and change him … make him popular.

From the book, page 1:

Simon was textbook geek. Skin like the underside of a toad and mushy fat. His pants were too short and his zipper gaped about an inch from the top. And his Fruit of the Looms rode up over his pants in back because he tucked his shirt into his tightey-whiteys. He had a plastic pocket protector, no joke, crammed with about a dozen pens and a calculator.

It was retro-cool in our part of Texas to wear loafers or Top-Sider boat shoes without socks; but Simon wore crepe-soled black lace-up wingtips.

Simon Glass was easy to hate. I never knew exactly why, there was too much to pick from. I guess, really, we each hated him for a different reason, but we didn't realize it until the day we killed him.

From *Shattering Glass*, by Gail Giles.

Booktalk
The Body Of Christopher Creed
Carol Plum-Ucci

From back flap of hardback:

Dear Mr. Ames,
I have a problem getting along with people. I know that people wish I were dead, and at this moment in time I see no alternative but to accommodate them in this wish. I have a wish. Not that anybody cares, but if anybody cared over the years, it was you. Here is my wish. I wish that I had been born somebody else – Mike Healy, Jose DeSantos, Tommy Idle, Evan Lucenti, Torey Adams, Alex Arrington. . . .
I don't understand why I get nothing and these boys get everything – athletic ability, good personalities, beautiful girlfriends. I am sure their parents will be buying them cars next year, while I will still be riding my bicycle until my parents decide I am old enough. Quite possibly, I will be twenty-five. I wish to understand life and luck and liberty. But I will never do that confined to this life, the personality defects I have been cursed with, the lack of abilities, the strain. I wish no malice on anyone. I only wish to be gone. Therefore I AM.

Yours respectfully,
Christopher Creed

That was the e-mail sent to our school principal by Chris. There is nothing unusual about a runaway these days. There is also not much original about a suicide or a murder. The weirdest fact about Chris Creed's disappearance was that he was just plain gone. There was no trail of blood, not even a drop. No piece of clothing on the side of the road. No runaway bus-ticket stub. No money missing from his bank account. No empty bottle of pills. No missing razor blades. No nothing. The only thing we knew was that Chris had not been abducted – because of the note, which was written at least 24 hours before he turned up missing. Chris grew up as the class freak – the bullies' punching bag. My name, Torey Adams, was on that list Chris sent to the principal. All I could think about was my own cruelty and the fact that I had been part of Chris's misery, and I knew I needed to find out what happened to him; find out the truth.

From *The Body of Christopher Creed*, by Carol Plum-Ucci.

Teen Book Discussion Groups

Libraries can reinforce literacy while doing other good things for teens

Teens are interested in joining book discussion groups for the same reason adults like book discussion groups – it's fun and they meet people! From a literacy point of view, book groups also get teens reading and expand their ability to interact with text. Expanding the ability to interact with the text raises comprehension levels. The discussion around the book and plot builds background knowledge and models active reading. The pleasure of the group encourages teens to spend time reading, a practice known to help literacy achievement.

Try these helpful hints when starting a teen book discussion group in your area.

- 🕮 Choose a staff member who enjoys working with teens to lead the group. This can be anyone from the reference staff to the circulation staff to your bookshelvers.

- 🕮 Book discussion groups can be held at the library, at the school, or at another friendly and safe place. A few libraries have even taken them inside juvenile detention centers or group foster homes.

- 🕮 *Provide refreshments when possible*. Food is a drawing factor. Teens enjoy cookies and cokes, bagels and coffee, and pizza parties.

- 🕮 Provide a comfortable space for teens to relax and lounge as they discuss the book. Try couches and beanbag chairs.

- 🕮 Schedule your book discussion group for a day and time that will have the least conflict for your teens. Avoid heavy homework nights. Consistency is a key factor. Make your book discussion group meet on the same day, at the same time, in the same location each month.

- 🕮 Work with the school library in allowing teens to pick up the book discussion group books both there and at your library.

- 🕮 If possible, purchase a paperback copy of the book discussion book for each teen to read before the first discussion session. If your library budget cannot bear the cost of these books, consider working with a community partner who will help – a local bank, business, or health care provider.

- 🕮 Consider a genre book discussion group or groups that keep on going or last over time.

- 🕮 Let the teens have a say in the decision making process. Solicit their opinions. Choose books that teens are interested in reading, not books that will be seen as too "young" or "juvenile" by your group.

- 🕮 ADVERTISE, ADVERTISE. Post flyers around the school and any place else teens hang out, send out personalized invitations, put an article in the school newspaper, and set up displays in the school library and in your library. Be sure to include any program co-sponsors in program promotion.

Remember:

Start out small and don't become discouraged too soon. If it's not working, talk to teens to see how the program can be improved; then revamp, and try again. There is a lot of interest out there in teen book discussion groups, so experiment with what works in your community and with a particular group of teens.

From a literacy point of view, vary the reading level of books so the text won't always be hard for participants. Also consider using titles available in audio to encourage teens who can't read well or don't want to read to ease into the book discussion experience. Using audio lets teens develop comprehension skills and interact with the story being told even if they can't handle the printed text very well. In the long run this actually helps their literacy levels.

If other circumstances and resources are right, consider forming a book discussion group at a teen parenting center, alternative school, or juvenile detention center. While low literacy may not be the reason teens are in these programs, experience and statistics lead us to expect that many of them will have reading problems. A book discussion group in a place where struggling or disaffected teens might participate has literacy benefits as well as benefits to help them connect with universal human experience, deal with their own lives, and relate to other people.

How To Do Your First Teen Summer Reading Program

At the Hannibal Public Library, we define "teen" as anyone who has completed 6th grade through the age of nineteen.

When we did our first summer reading program for teens, there were no materials available from the state. We simply adapted the format for recording reading from our children's program. An artistic teen patron designed the artwork for our reading log and flyers. We then advertised by sending press releases to the newspapers, radio and television stations and the middle and high schools. The food coupons used for our children as weekly rewards were used for our teens. We did however, contact several businesses for grand prizes, which were more suitable for teens. A local bank donated a $50 savings bond, our Wal-Mart store donated a $25 gift certificate and a local putter golf business donated some free game passes. The children's and young adult programs were totally separate, with the teen reading logs kept close to the adult circulation desk and young adult materials. Our children's department is on a different floor. We felt it was important for our teens to know this program was not a part of the children's program. As the teens recorded the titles of the books they read, they were given a drawing slip. These were placed in a box and used for our grand prize drawing at the end of the program. On the last day of the program, we put soda on ice, ordered pizza, and made multiple copies of a scavenger hunt. All participating teens were invited to this program. We did a "get acquainted" activity and sent the teens on the scavenger hunt. When the youth returned to the meeting room we discussed the scavenger hunt answers as they ate pizza. We then did the grand prize drawing. This program, our first young adult program, was very scary for me but the teens seemed to have a good time.

One instrumental thing we did was to start a monthly young adult group meeting at our library during the school year. As the teens came into the library and filled out their reading logs, they were asked to fill in a survey form. The form we used was adapted from the Missouri State Library publication, "Bridging the Gap." We removed several of the questions and added the following:

Would you be interested in being part of a group of teens that meets at the library monthly to read and discuss books, and advise the library staff on what materials you believe would be good in our young adult collection?

If the teens answered yes to the question, they were asked to fill in their name and address. We then used this list of names and addresses to generate a mailing list. We scheduled our first meeting and sent postcards to each teen that had indicated an interest. We continue to gather new names for our mailing list from the summer reading club. (Yes, I do weed it.) I continue to send postcards a week to ten days before each meeting. We have had as few as three and as many as 21 teens at a single young adult meeting.

Now there are tools available through the state of Missouri to help you in planning your teen summer reading program. A reproducible manual, *Book Your Summer*, is available online at the Missouri State Library Web site. This publication has excellent tips on doing your first program. In addition, each year the State Library sends every public library a children's summer reading club manual and a teen summer reading program manual.

One of the things that pleases me the most about our teen summer reading program and young adult group is that we have teens from all walks of life who participate; teens who love to read and are scholastic achievers as well as teens who are at risk and participate because they need to be a part of something. Our libraries offer programs for teens that do not qualify for any extracurricular activities at school because of their low grades. Many times all an at-risk child or teen needs is someone to be happy to see them and believe that they are valuable and worthwhile.

Top Ten Ways to Ruin a Teen Summer Reading Program

10. ***Make sure that all your books are hardbacks, or your paperbacks are ragged and outdated.***

    Teens prefer paperbacks in good-looking condition. Try to "refurbish" or restock the YA collection before the summer reading program. Make sure you have plenty of all types of genres, especially series.

9. ***Don't send promotional materials to schools.***

    The public and private schools are a wonderful way to promote any activities at the library. Personal contact is the best way to promote the programs, but sending publicity to the classes works, too. Send bulk to the schools, but send individual flyers to teachers in the area, especially ones you've worked with before, or you know have a special interest in a program.

8. ***Make the program as hard as possible for participants and staff.***

    The KISS principle works best. If the program is too complicated, teens aren't going to participate. They like to be independent and if they have to ask too many questions, they just won't take part.

    The staff involved in the actual implementation of the program are very important factors in the success of the program. If they don't "buy into" the reading program, it isn't going to work. The less time they need to spend dealing with explaining the rules or handing out materials and prizes, the better chance they will enjoy or at least be willing to help in the program. Give them a chance to do the fun parts of the program as well as the daily tasks.

7. ***Be rigid in interpreting the rules / Don't be flexible.***

    Each participant in the program is an individual, and the program should reflect his or her individuality. The rules are guidelines for the program, but making the participant's needs or interests count goes a long way to guaranteeing success.

6. ***Make lists of specific books participants must read.***

    All teens don't like the same thing, and if you make lists or give them books to read, they will view it as homework. Be flexible with what you allow them to read, <u>including</u> both the topic and the format. Many teens are daunted by a hardcover novel, but will happily read a magazine from cover to cover.

5. ***Have the librarians view the program as another of the endless tasks assigned to them.***

   Getting the staff to go along with the extra work a teen reading program will bring can be hard, but getting the staff excited about teens participating in the program is just as important as getting the teens excited. Find ways to involve staff in developing the program, including asking for their opinions. If the teens feel like they are a bother to the library staff they won't continue participating, and neither will their friends.

4. ***Make the publicity and promotional materials drab and lifeless.***

   Attractive, colorful and lively materials for publicity, and for the program participants, is a big deciding factor in the success of a program. If the forms, instructions, posters, etc., don't catch their attention, it is going to take a big push to get them interested in the program.

3. ***Don't publicize the program at all.***

   Word of mouth, posters, newspaper articles, etc., are essential to the success of the program. If teens don't know about the program they aren't going to participate. Publicity needs to be in the community for parents, teachers, grandparents, and the teens themselves to know about it. Having the program announced on radio stations or TV spots gives much more exposure!

2. ***Don't give incentives, or give age-inappropriate incentives.***

   Getting a prize, reward, or something free is exciting no matter what age you are. So getting something for participating in the program is a great way to get more teens involved. But make sure the incentives are things they will like and things they don't feel are too childish for them. Giving them a choice of what they can have is a good way to make sure you have something for everyone.

1. ***Have the program registration and publicity located in the children's department or have the same program and theme as the children's department.***

   This is the ultimate kiss of death to the success of a teen program. Making the teens feel like they are being treated like children, or as if they were at the same level as people half their age, is a big insult to them. Make them feel like there is something of their own at the library. Make them feel they are special enough to have their own program. Make them feel like you view them not as children, but as young adults.

Teen Summer Reading Dos and Don'ts

Follow these tips to make your teen programs more manageable and enjoyable for the teens and the library staff.

DO!

☺ Keep it simple

☺ Have lots of prizes

☺ Let teens participate with friends

☺ Advertise where teens congregate (movie theatres, bookstores, video stores, schools)

☺ Start out small with few expectations

☺ Have patience and be flexible

☺ Make it easy for teens to succeed

☺ Provide bibliographies, bookmarks, and/or table displays promoting authors and literature of interest to teens

☺ Ask for local teen input in planning and implementing your program

☺ Have fun and stay happy!

DON'T!

☹ Put participants' names on the library walls, or otherwise make them feel like "little kids"

☹ Breathe down their necks

☹ Make it competitive

☹ Expect large numbers of teens to sign up

☹ Judge the teen program participation against participation in your children's program

☹ Lose your mind!

What libraries do for teen literacy in Missouri

A list of library literacy efforts, ideas, activities, and collaborations

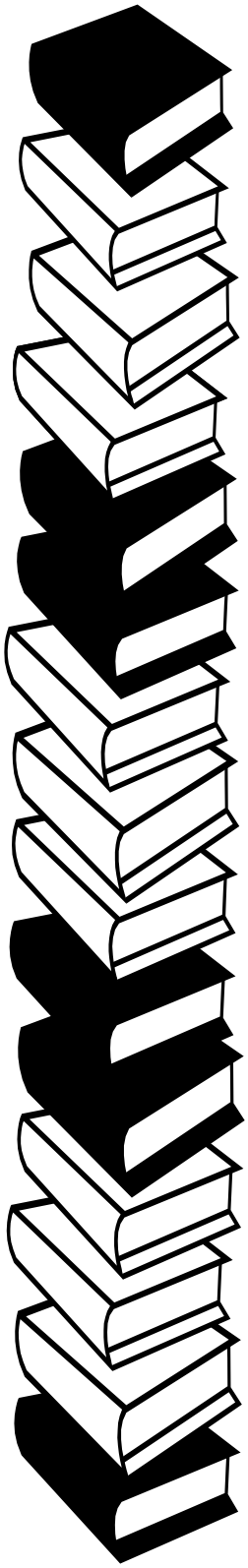
Literacy efforts in Missouri's libraries are diverse, and they represent many kinds of service and literacy support. The ideas collected below come from libraries in Missouri, some previously done, others are in process, and still others ideas being developed. They are collected here as a catalogue of ideas that any other library in Missouri might borrow to increase library literacy efforts. The best ideas often come from the trenches!

- Young adult book groups.
- Young adult writers group.
- Teen group that performs or act as storytellers.
- Poetry slams, open mike nights, or storytelling events by and for teens.
- Read-a-thons, sometimes to raise money for a charity, sometimes for fun.
- Teen versions of ESOL conversation partners groups, if there is an immigrant population in the area.
- Partnerships for reading efforts with local schools, both programming and having certain materials that correlate with programs at the school.
- Activity time set aside for a group foster home.
- Drama reading group in a juvenile detention facility.
- Public library presentations and book talks at schools.
- Teen classes/groups for books, or hobby groups/interest groups. (Reading about the hobby or interest is an integral part of the program.)
- Teen summer reading with incentives from local businesses.
- Programs pairing teens with younger children for mutual reading benefit.
- Teens assisting with programming for younger children .
- Teens tutoring senior citizens on the computer. (The literacy connection is the text on the screen and instruction sheets or notes, but there are other benefits.)

There are good reasons besides literacy to do programming for teens. These ideas focus on literacy, but any involvement with reading or the library helps create an atmosphere in which literacy is valued and practiced.

Reproducible Information

14 Reasons Why Books Are Better Than TV



1. You don't have to look at a 'guide' to see when you can read what book.
2. You can get a snack and not miss a thing.
3. You don't need to hunt for the lost remote.
4. Your parents won't gripe at you for reading too much.
5. You can answer the phone and not miss anything.
6. You'll score major points with your teachers.
7. Books are free at your library.
8. There are no stupid commercials about the medicine you should take to relieve your hay fever, indigestion and excess gas.
9. You can do it in the car (only not when you're driving).
10. You don't need electricity to read at night. You can use a flashlight.
11. You don't have to worry about the cable going off.
12. You don't get interrupted with breaking news on a politician's personal life.
13. You don't have to wait until tomorrow to find out the ending.
14. You can enjoy it outside.

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